262 With čurípo, the kurúnda is one of the most
252 typical of Tarascan dishes.[16]

There are various forms of the kurúnda, which are eaten on special occasions. The details follow.

Atápakwa kurúnda.—Atápakwa is a sauce made of any kind of chile, cooked, toasted, or raw. This is ground with green tomatoes, garlic, and onion, and seasoned with salt. Fresh or dried cheese, finely broken up, may be added. The regular kurúnda is simply dipped in the sauce as it is eaten. This dish may be served at any time, but it is most frequently used when men come home to lunch from the fields or on other occasions in the middle of the day when the family do not ordinarily have a midday meal.

Agwákata kurúnda.—Beans of any sort are cooked and ground. They are placed in layers alternating with layers of *nixtamal* until a thick cake is formed. This is wrapped in maize leaves and steamed. Agwákata kurúndas are made primarily at the time of the bean harvest (Cherán grows few beans) and are eaten at any of the main meals. They may also be given to children between meals.

Nákatamal.—This is a tamale made with maize dough filled with meat and chile sauce. Beef is commonly used, although pork may also be employed. The meat is boiled in water and cut in small pieces without bones. It is then mixed with a chile sauce made of the dry chile known as *pasiya*, which is cooked in water and ground with tomatoes, garlic, and onions. These tamales are not wrapped in maize leaves but in dry maize husks soaked in water. A small quantity of dough is spread over the leaf and on this is placed a small quantity of meat and sauce. The leaf is then doubled over and the tamale cooked in boiling water. The nákatamal must be small in size to be properly made. The name and the type suggest it is of
[177] Valley of Mexico origin. It is ordinarily made
769 only for the fiestas of the dead on the 1st and
252 2d of November, although it was served to me
262 once on an ordinary occasion. It forms a part of the offerings made to the dead and is also eaten in the graveyard by the mourners and

[16] In Parícutin kurúnda means "corn husks." Kurunduríni means "to wrap tamales in maize leaves."

[769] guests. A few are made for sale on the 1st and 2d of November.

Tamalito.—This is made by mixing dough with lard and salt, forming a small ball, which is wrapped in maize leaves and cooked in boiling water. It is usually eaten the following morning for breakfast, commonly with *atole blanco.*

Čarikurúnda.—This tamale is made of black maize, boiled with wood ashes, washed, and milled. The dough is allowed to stand one night, becoming somewhat bitter. Beans are cooked and ground on the metate. A layer of bean paste is laid over a layer of maize dough, covering the metate. This is cut in squares, about three fingers wide, which are then rolled up, wrapped in maize leaves, and cooked in boiling water. The čarikurúnda is about the size of the kurúnda. It is made about March, at the period in which the sowing of maize begins. The colored maize is usually set apart out of each harvest for this purpose. A little white maize is often added "to improve the taste."

Atóles (*kamáta*) of various kinds are made. The maize dough, prepared as for tortillas, is dissolved in water and cooked with various flavorings. The broth is sometimes fairly thick but ordinarily is drunk from a glass, bowl, or cup. There are also atoles made of other grains. Many are made at special seasons of the year or for special occasions. Atoles are usually eaten for the morning meal.

Nuríte kamáta.—This is the most common form of atole. It is made as is described above but is flavored with an herb called nuríte. It is usually eaten for breakfast not less than once a week. Nuríte is a wild herb greatly used for flavoring and also for medicinal purposes. It imparts a slightly bitter flavor to atole, somewhat like *yerba buena.* No sugar, salt, or other flavoring is employed. This atole is commonly eaten with tortillas and a little cheese, or squash, or *gordos* of either dry or green maize.

Kamáta urápiti.—This is said to mean "white atole." It is made of dough from either white or yellow maize cooked in water with a little thickening substance (not identified) and either without any seasoning whatever or with laurel (nurúkata). A small bite is taken from a cake of brown sugar, followed by a draft of atole, and then a drink of *aguardiente.* The atole

765 these prayers, but it is not necessary for other
767 relatives to do so. However, if a relative attends the first day, he is obligated to continue the entire 9 days. On the ninth day, the *novena* is sometimes observed with prayers in the house. There is no purification or burning of incense or other materials in the house.

765 After the funeral, the parents or the surviv-
[152] ing spouse may remain very sad. If it appears they may be made ill of "sadness," the relatives visit the survivors frequently, talking to them of things which they think may alleviate their condition and giving consolation. If this does not improve matters, they seek a curer who gives medicines.

A very few families pay for Masses for the deceased. More commonly, members of the family of the deceased will visit the church from time to time and burn candles and pray for the dead.

A few additional observations may be of interest. It is said that formerly the bells were
[178] tolled 10 or 12 times in the morning and afternoon when someone had died. This is not done now. The graveyard is on the lower edge of town and is surrounded by an adobe wall. In some cases the graves are paved with cobblestones or more elaborate masonry pavements. On rare occasions a tomb or head stone is erected, but in the majority of cases only a wooden cross is put up. The age of the present graveyard is unknown; the oldest date found on a grave was 1883. There is no evidence of offerings (except in connection with the Day of the Dead), although the graveyard is apparently visited at night by some people to judge by the presence of numerous partially burned pitch pine splinters about the entrance. All informants denied knowledge of such visits, however.

769 The major mourning ceremony is the Day of the Dead, November 2. Several days before this date the graveyard is divided in four sections and the young men from each *barrio* are required by the municipal officials to clear the brush and weeds away from the entire cemetery. On November 1 everyone prepares quantities of nákatamales, a small tamale filled with beef in chile sauce and wrapped in husks rather than maize leaves. Fruit is also purchased and bread is made. A few make tamales for sale, but most people make their own.

769 The night of November 1, a Mass is celebrated in church. In 1941 the priest spoke to the people against taking candles or food to the graveyard, telling them instead to bring candles to the church. Another Mass is held the morning of the 2d, after which people go to the graveyard. There is no organized procession, nor does everyone arrive at the same time. In many cases only the women and children attend, although usually the men drop in for a short time and some stay for several hours. Indeed, the function is said to be a woman's affair and men may not carry candles or even take part if they have no women folk.

Generally, the first thing the visitors do is to more thoroughly clean the graves of their dead. Often the ground is dug up and the mounds are built up and shaped. The graves of the more recent dead (children, parents, and siblings) are then decorated with flowers and pine boughs. Often pine boughs are set up at each corner of a grave or group of graves. Each grave mound has flowers sprinkled over it, mostly yellow marigolds and purple orchids. In some cases part of the flowers are finely shredded and sprinkled over the grave and crosses are sometimes marked out in flowers. Pine needles are also sprinkled over some graves and sometimes baskets of food placed on the graves. Food is placed at the foot of the grave in all cases and candles are burned, despite the admonitions of the priest.

After the grave is decorated, the family sits around and chats. There are few evidences of sorrow; one or two people remark that the day is "very sad," but most people seem cheerful in a quiet way and there is even some subdued laughter. the *rezadores* or "prayers" go around from group to group and say lengthy prayers using a rosary. Everyone in the group kneels while the prayers are said. Fruit, bread, and tamales are given the *rezador* for his prayers.

[767] [782]

In 1941 the priest came and said prayers. He charged a *real*, 12½ centavos for each prayer. His prayers were shorter than those of the *rezador* and he and those with him remained standing, but he sprinkled the grave with holy water. He also scolded people for having candles and food offerings; so most

769 782

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769 782 people hid them when the priest approached, placing them out again when he moved on. The *rezadores* continued, but kept unobtrusive in another part of the graveyard from the section where the priest was functioning. Most people had both priest and *rezador*.

769 [574] About noon or shortly afterward most people eat lunch consisting of nákatamales, bread, and fruit. Friends and acquaintances who stop to chat are usually given two tamales, which they eat at the time. After 3 or 4 hours at the

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CONCLUSION AND FURTHER PROBLEMS

121 184 Of immediate concern in dealing with a group as large as the Tarascans is the question whether Cherán is adequately representative of the group as a whole. Certainly Cherán is not typical in its size and this difference alone makes it probable that it is not entirely representative of other Tarascan towns. A complete answer to the question raised must await more extensive investigation, but the staff of the present study visited or investigated enough other communities to indicate that, in a broad sense, Cherán is probably fairly typical. From a narrower viewpoint it is certain that many detailed differences exist. Strong indications also exist that there are some regional differences which have already been mentioned. The villages about Lake Pátzcuaro, through their partial dependence upon fishing and closer contacts with Mestizo culture, necessarily must be somewhat different. The villages about La Cañada likewise seem distinguishable as a group. Probably the Sierra communities may be set apart as a regional unit, although it is possible that the Sierra group may ultimately be found to consist of two or more sections. Finally, a number of marginal towns assimilated to some degree into Mestizo culture present special problems.

121 Final resolution of the question raised seems to call for at least two further steps in the study of the Tarascans. First, at least two or three additional community studies are needed, one in the Lake Pátzcuaro region, and another in La Cañada. Very probably another Sierra town should also be studied, preferably one at considerable distance from Cherán and with a

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graveyard, people return home. Few people do any but the most necessary work on this day.

Sometime during the day, either before going to the graveyard or after returning, most people hang strings of yellow flowers over the frames of the house doors. Yellow is regarded as the color of mourning still, as it is in many parts of Indian Mexico. In view of reports of more elaborate ceremonies in other Tarascan towns, it should be recorded that no one at Cherán spends the night in the cemetery.

CONCLUSION AND FURTHER PROBLEMS

significant manufacturing industry supplementing its agriculture. The second step would be an intensive but rapid survey of a large number of communities, perhaps by a trait-list technique, to discover the extent of local and regional variation. Quite possibly such a survey would reveal additional types of communities meriting study. For certain types of problems, of course, the marginal, more acculturated communities require study, but a fairly complete knowledge of typical Tarascan culture seems the first need.

The present study of Cherán reveals a number of points of considerable interest. Perhaps the most striking fact about Cherán is the essentially European origin of most of the culture and the relatively small number of traits of native provenience. Most of the material culture of Cherán is probably European, although obviously some of the plants, including the major crop, maize, is native. Farming techniques, implements, housing, men's clothing (and possibly women's clothing) are Indian only to a slight degree. The economic specialization and trade patterns may be based upon aboriginal conditions, yet they are known to have been formalized by Europeans. Political and ceremonial organization are also European, although in part their origins represent Bishop Vasco de Quiroga's interpretation of Thomas More's "Utopia" (1923). The extensive *compadre* system is but an enlargement upon European ideas. The origin of the Tarascan wedding ceremony alone remains obscure and may have important native antecedents. Concepts of the supernatural,